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Dying in PEACE *in a* GOOD OLD AGE.

A SERMON

Preach'd the *Lords-Day* after the *FUNERAL*

Of the Honourable and Aged

SIMEON STODDARD *Esq;*

of *Boston.*

Who departed this Life, *October 15th.* 1730.

Ætat. 80.

By *Benjamin Colman.*

I Kings xix. 32, 35. *Now Barzillai was a very Aged Man, even Fourscore Years old : —— And he said to the KING, Can thy Servant taste what I eat or what I drink ?*

BOSTON, N. E.

Printed by S. KNEELAND and T. GREEN for J. PHILLIPS, M, DCC, XXX.

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To my Honoured Friends,

Anthony Stoddard *Esq*;

AND

Mr. William Stoddard

of Boston.

GENTLEMEN,

AFTER two Funeral Sermons *that went to the Press at the Desire of Your Honourable* FATHER; *the* One *Preached upon the Death of his* BROTHER, *your Venerable* UNCLE *of* North-hampton; *the* Other *upon the Death of his* SON, *your Exemplary* BROTHER; *I will not refuse You the Copy you ask of a plain* Discourse *I made upon* HIS OWN *Decease.*

YOU owe more than this Expression of Filial Respect and Honour *to his Memory, Whom* GOD *made a very good* FATHER *to You; and You were secret Witnesses of his* Goodness *to others, and of his* good Conversation in CHRIST.

THERE was one thing Singular *in the Life of Your* FATHER, *and very surprizing to the* Town *at the Time of it; When He broke off his* Worldly Business *in the most prosperous* Run *of it, in the Midst of Life, declaring that he had Enough; having attain'd that Estate, by the Blessing of* GOD, *which He tho't ought to satisfy Him.*

ABOUT that Time being chosen by the Town *to serve the* Poor, *He did it for some Years with a great deal of Labour and Pleasure, as I well remember.*

SINCE

DEDICATION.

SINCE that, and I ſuppoſe before, his Charities *to the Poor, and* Donations *for pious Uſes, have been liberal and many; wherein I have been aſſured by His* Honoured Relict *that he ſtudied Secrecy.*

HIS annual *Bounties to the Poor, the Widows and the Fatherleſs, at our* Yearly Thanksgivings, *were more open and known; and very great: Nor was the* Levite *then forgotten by Him.*

INDEED He was a Lover of Good Men, *and of* GOD's Houſe *and* Worſhipers; *but more eſpecially friendly and reſpectful to the* Miniſters of Christ, *and never tho't 'em eno' honoured and ſupported in their Work.*

THESE things being known to be true, *and eaſie to be proved by many* living Witneſſes, *I judge they* ought *to be ſaid, and I* dare *not ſend the following* Sermon *to the Preſs without inſerting them.*

Gentlemen,

THAT You may both live long, *if* GOD *pleaſe, and do much* more Good *in Your Generation, than Thoſe that are gone before You; And that Your* Children, *and all the* Poſterity *of the* Deceased, *may be the* Seed *whom tho LORD will bleſs; is the ſincere Deſire and Prayer of*

Your Affectionate Friend

and Humble Servant,

Boſton, *Nov.* 14. 1730.

Benjamin Colman.

A *peaceful Death,* *in a good Old Age.*

GENESIS xv. 15.

AND thou ſhalt go to thy Fathers in Peace, Thou ſhalt be buried in a good Old Age.

THE Words were ſpoken by a Gracious GOD to his ſervant *Abraham*, and He ſpake to him *as a Man to his Friend.* Indeed he ſpake to Him of his *Death* and *Burial*, but that was friendly and kind eno' to One of *Abrahams* Mind; whoſe Life declared that he was intent on *Death*; (i. e. a happy End of the preſent Life) for he *plainly ſought a better Country, that is an Heavenly.*

In the *Context* we find GOD ſaying to *Abraham*, " *Fear not, I am thy Shield and thy exceeding great Reward.* Let any one find Favour and Grace from GOD to live in the Faith, Devotion and Obedience of *Abraham*, and he need not *fear* Death; for GOD will be his *Shield* in a dying hour, and his infinite eternal *Reward* after it.

Again we find *Abraham believing in* GOD, againſt humane Proſpect, *and it was counted to him for Righteouſneſs:* v. 6.

We find GOD alſo *covenanting with Abraham* by Sacrifice; ordering him to take an *Heifer*, a *She-Goat*,

a

a *Ram*, a *Turtle-dove* and a *Young-Pigeon*; and to lay the *Pieces* one over againſt the other: And when it grew dark, behold a *ſmoaking Furnace* and a *burning Lamp* paſſed between the Pieces, and ſome think *conſumed* them. Then it was that GOD revealed to *Abraham* what ſhould befal his *Seed* for four Hundred Years to come, before their Poſſeſſion of the promis'd *Canaan*. But as for *Yourſelf* (ſaid GOD to him in the Words of my *Text*,) *Thou ſhalt go to thy Fathers in Peace, Thou ſhalt be buried in a good old Age.*

THE Revelation or Promiſe here made to *Abraham* is in four Particulars, and all reſpecting his *Death*: That he ſhould *go to his Fathers*, that he ſhould go *in Peace*, that he ſhould *be buried*, and in a *good Old Age*. All which ſuppoſes and implies this certain Truth, " That the GOD of *Abraham* orders graciouſly all that concerns the *Dying* of his godly Ones; the *Time*, the *Manner*, and all the Circumſtances of it. All the Spiritual Seed of *Abraham* are under the ſame ſpecial Regards of Providence. *Precious in the ſight of the Lord is* their *Death*. Whether they die in Childhood and Youth, in middle or old Age, after good or evil Days, in Peace and Light or under Fears and Darkneſs; it is all ordered by a gracious GOD.

MOREOVER we are here told, 1. That at Death the Godly *go to their Fathers* Their Souls go to the *Paradiſe of Chriſt*, that bliſsful Place for the Spirits of the *Juſt*, until the Reſurrection.

ABRAHAM had pious Progenitors and godly Anceſtors; *Adam*, *Seth*, *Enoch*, *Noah and Shem*. To the Souls of *theſe* his Fathers *Abraham's* Spirit went, when it left the Body. And now, ſince the Death of *Abraham*, this Paradiſe of happy Souls is called *Abrahams Boſome*; and when the Godly die they go to *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob* in the Kingdom of GOD?

THOU *ſhalt go to thy Fathers*: It ſeems to ſpeak a going *willingly*, and with a *Deſire* to be with them;

them; as we go with Pleaſure to ſee our Dear Friends andRelations that are removed from us. The Godly are *gathered to their People*, the People of theirChoice and Love, and to the Place of their Deſire; the Congregation of the Bleſſed.

2. We learn here, That the *Interment of the Dead* is a decent and becoming thing.

Not all the Children of faithful *Abraham* are ſure, as he was, of being *buried*. It is reckoned among the Favours of Providence, to find a *Grave* after Death. Nature teaches this Regard to the dead Body, and the Soul before it leaves its lov'd Companion deſires this ſmall Care may be taken of it.

The *Heathens* went far in this point, if we may believe their *Poets*, in their vain Theology: as if the departed Spirit could find no Reſt until the funeral Rites were paid to the Body. But this is all groſs and animal, like the reſt of their rude Ideas of the Inviſible World.

But to be ſure *Religion* teaches us to bury our Dead; as *Abraham* did *Sarah*, and *Iſaac* did *Abraham*, and *Joſeph* did *Jacob*: And as the Diſciples of *John the Baptiſt* did him, and the Brethren did *Stephen*, and *Joſeph* did the Body of Jesus.

The Bodies of the *Juſt* remain in an indiſſoluble Relation to CHRIST, and alſo to their own glorified *Spirits*, after Death: And they ſhould be treated by their ſurviving Friends, as what have been, and are yet to be, *living Temples* of the HOLY GHOST. CHRIST will raiſe them in Glory and Incorruption another Day, and faſhion them like to *His Own* moſt glorious Body.

Nevertheleſs there are many of his *holy Ones*, and of his bleſſed *Martyrs* in particular, who never enjoy'd a Burial. The SON OF GOD Himſelf *ſcarce* found an *Interment* and a Grave: But it was *meet* in his Humiliation that he ſhould be laid in the duſt, and *neceſſary* to his Riſing again.

LET us learn to take care of our *Souls*, that these go to the Fathers, *Abraham* and *Israel*, whether our Bodies find a Funeral or no.

AGAIN, 3. To be buried in *Old Age* is the Desire of Nature by the Will of GOD.

WE naturally desire Life, and love many Days, that we may see Good. And it is promis'd as a Favour of GOD, " *That thy Days may be long upon the Earth.* And a *good* Old Age is a very considerable Circumstance in the presentLife. So my *Text* speaks of it, and so *Abraham* found it; Gen. xxv. 7, 8, 9. *And these are the Days of the Years of Abrahams Life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen Years; Then Abraham gave up the Ghost, and died in a good old age, an old Man and full of years, and was gathered to his People; And his Sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the Cave of Mackpelah.*

I have but glanc'd at *these Things* in the Text, which might have been worthy of more Inlargement. It is that I may insist the more upon the *two* other greater and weightier Things in it; " A good Mans dying *in Peace*, and in a *good Old Age.*

LET the *Doctrine* then be,

THAT a peaceful Death in a good Old Age is the gracious Favour of GOD to some of the Children of faithful Abraham.

AND the ENQUIRIES here before us are,

1. WHAT may be called *a good Old Age*?
2. WHAT it is to *go in Peace*?
3. WHAT there is of GOD's *gracious Favour* in these things?

I. WHAT may be called *a good Old Age.*

OLD *Age* is esteemed *Good* in it self. Mankind account

count it ſo and deſire it. It gives a longer Opportunity to *get* Good, and to *do* Good, which is all the Good there is in it: If we may be the *richer in good Works*, and come to our Grave as *a Shock of Corn in its ſeaſon*, laden and white for the Harveſt.

But old Age is not always alike good. Some enjoy a better Old Age than others, on many Accounts. Some have fewer *evil* Days, and ſome ſee many more *good* Days.

A *great* Age is ſometimes called a *good* Age: But it is not always ſo; nay not often ſo. From *Moſes* time *Fourſcore* Year old is a *great* Old Age. *Barzillai* is called a *very aged Man even fourſcore Years old.* He was able at that Age to receive the KING, and provide him Suſtenance.

To be particular,

1. An *eaſie healthful* Old Age is call'd and accounted a *good* Old Age. Health and Eaſe are the *Salt* of Life. Without theſe it loſes its taſte and ſavour. The bodily Weakneſſes and Infirmities of Old Age make the Days of it evil. Eccl. xii. 1. *While the evil Days come not, when thou ſhalt ſay, I have no Pleaſure.*

2. Plentiful *Circumſtances* in Old Age help to make it the more eaſie and comfortable, and to relieve us under the Infirmities and Evils of it. There is this Good in Riches, or a competent *Eſtate*, where there is a Heart to uſe it to the End of our Pilgrimage. So *Barzillai*'s Eſtate was his Credit and Comfort at fourſcore years old, tho' he could little taſte what he eat or what he drank. He had a noble Heart, larger than his Eſtate, and fed the King and his Houſhold. This is the Good of the Labour of our younger Years, if we live to be old, having got a little of the World by Prudence, Diligence and Righteouſneſs. Neither is there other Good in it, whether we be Young or Old, than the free and ſo-

ber and religious Uſe of it, the few Days we have to live.

3. The Continuance of *Underſtanding* and Reaſon, with our *ſenſes*, makes Old Age good. There is uſually a great Decay of theſe in our advanced years. As the *Keepers of the Houſe* (the Arms and Hands, to uſe the elegant Words of *Solomon*) *tremble*, and the *Strong Men bow themſelves*, (the Back and Shoulders ſtoop, the Legs and Thighs buckle) and the *Grinders ceaſe*, the Teeth grow few, and the Jaws weak: So thoſe *that look out of the Windows are darkned, and the Daughters of Muſick are bro't low*: the Eyes grow dim, the Ears deaf, the Tongue faultring, the Lips quivering, and the Voice low. But if Sight and Hearing, the Powers of Mind and Memory, ready Apprehenſion and ſound Judgment are continued to a Perſon in Old Age, theſe things go a great way to make it *good*.

Moſes and *Joſhua* and *Caleb* were greatly favoured in their Age. *Moſes* Eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated. *Caleb* was as ſtrong at *Eighty Five*, as when he was but Forty. Theſe were rare Inſtances. *Iſaac* and *Jacob* loſt much of their Sight in Old Age, and ſo the Prophet *Ahijah*, 1 Kings xiv. 4.

4. A *ſerene, eaſie placid Mind* in Old Age, very much helps to make it good to our ſelves and others. It is one of the greateſt Evils incident to Old Age, to be fretful and uneaſie. But here and there we find an aged Parent or Friend as chearful and pleaſant, their Wiſdom remaining with them, as others in the Days of their Youth. This makes 'em a Pleaſure and Comfort to all about 'em, as long as they live. This is the Gift of God, and ſhould be the more conſtant Fruit of Heavenly Grace.

6. Our *Children about us*, if they are wiſe and good, dutiful and kind, contribute a great deal to a good old Age. So the Old Age of *Abraham* and

Sarah

Sarah was bleſs'd and brightned with a blooming *Iſaac*, their Laughter and Joy. So *Jacob* went down to *Egypt* with his Train of ſeventy Souls; and the Sons of *Joſeph* were bro't to his Knees. *Joſeph* likewiſe ſaw *Ephraims* Sons of the third Generation. Theſe are *the Crown of Old Men*, and make Old Age *good*. So *Job* could again in his old Age ſay, " *My Children are about me.*

6. A *holy* Old Age is the *good* Old Age. *Grace* is the chief Good, be we old or young. But more eſpecially it is the Riches and Ornament, the Dignity and Beauty of the Aged. Tit. ii. 7. *The aged Women, that they be in Behaviour as becometh Holineſs.* Prov. xvi. 31. *The hoary Head is a Crown of glory, if it be found in the Way of Righteouſneſs.* Such were *Anna the Propheteſs*, a Widow of fourſcore, and *Simeon the juſt and devout*, waiting together for the Conſolation of *Iſrael.* Luke ii. 25, 36.

7. A *uſeful fruitful Old Age* is a good Old Age. Not every holy Old Age is alike fruitful. But the more uſeful it is, the better. Pſal. xcii. ult. *They ſhall ſtill bring forth Fruit in Old Age, they ſhall be fat and flouriſhing.* Then the Path of the juſt is as the ſhining Light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect Day. This Bleſſing *Eliphaz* wiſh'd to *Job*, and he had it: Job v. 26. *Thou ſhalt come to thy Grave in a full Age, like as a ſhock of Corn cometh in its ſeaſon.* And this the *Pſalmiſt* hop'd & ask'd for himſelf, Pſal. lxxi. 16, 18. *I will go on in the ſtrength of the* LORD GOD, *now that I am old and gray-headed.*

8. A *good Hope*, thro' Grace, *of a better Life* all the Days of Old Age, makes it *very good.* This lightens every Darkneſs and Burthen, and *renews the ſtrength as the Eagles.* Read the old Man's Song, Pſalm lxxi. 8, 18. *Let my mouth be filled with thy Praiſe and with thy Honour all the Day: I will hope continually, and will yet praiſe thee more and more.* So *Moſes* had a full *ſight of Canaan* before he died. It

was to him the Type of Heaven. The LORD ſtrengthned his Sight and Faith together. So the *Patriarchs* liv'd on the *Promiſes* all their Life long, and gave Commandment concerning their *Bones*. So *Simeon* took up the *Holy Child* in his aged Arms, & Bleſſed GOD and ſaid, *Lord, letteſt thou thy Servant depart in Peace, according to thy Word; for mine Eyes have ſeen thy Salvation.* Such a one was *Paul the Aged*, 2 Tim. iv. 6, 7, 8. *For I am now ready to be offered, and the Time of my Departure is at hand; I have fought a good Fight, I have finiſhed my Courſe, I have kept the Faith; Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſs, which the Lord the Righteous Judge ſhall give me at that Day.*

9. EASIE *and holy Dying* makes the good Old Age perfect. When the Lamp of Life burns out, rather than is blown out; and the Soul goes willingly, without any great pain or ſtrife to the Body. This is to *expire* and die, while for the moſt part Death kills and *ſlays* the young and ſtrong. So *Jacob* gathered up his feet into the Bed, and gave up the Ghoſt: He died willingly and eaſily. And ſo *Simeon* has been repreſented as dying on the ſpot, as ſoon as he had bleſſed *Mary*, and prais'd GOD for and propheſied concerning the *Holy Babe*.

IN a word, Continuance in Faith, Patience, Charity, Prayer and Praiſe, with a ſpiritual Mind, and holy Affections, makes Old Age *good*, and Death *happy* at the End of it.

AND thus I have ſaid, what may be call'd a *good old Age*. Eminently, the *holy uſeful* Old Age is to be ſo called. For then a Perſon is ſtill bringing Glory to GOD, and doing Good in the World as long as he lives; by his Example, Prayers, Counſel and Advice, Admonitions and Exhortations; by patient Suffering and enduring Affliction. When we *grow* in Goodneſs to the Day of Death, the Old Age is good.

To

To paſs a Reflection or two here,

1. Let not *young People* expect to arrive at old Age. How few attain it! how many more die *young* or in middle Age, than live to be old? And GOD can make it as *good* to die then, as to live longer. GOD can give Peace then, & make Dying eaſie and happy. This may be much better than to live and ſee *Evil Days*, and be uſeleſs in the World.

2. Let thoſe that are like to be *old* look for many an *Evil* in Old Age, unleſs they be now labouring to make it *good* and happy by a ſober, righteous and godly Life. This is *Health to the Navel, and Marrow to the Bones*: Yea ſaving Health and Joy to the Soul.

3. Let Thoſe that are *in Age* ſtudy, pray and labour to make their old Age good, *by a patient Continuance in Well-doing, ſeeking after Glory, Honour and Immortality.* Heb. x. 36. *For ye have need of Patience, that after ye have done the Will of GOD ye may inherit the Promiſes.* 1 Pet. i. 13. *Be ſober and hope to the End, for the Grace that is to be bro't unto you at the Revelation of JESUS CHRIST.*

4. Let the *Conſorts, Children* and *Friends* of ſuch as have died in a good old Age, be *comforted* and give Glory to GOD, who ſhews ſuch Grace to ſinful mortal Man, that might have died from the Womb, or expired in the Belly.

This *good Old Age* deſcribed, has been very much the Lot of an Aged & Honourable Perſon, *SIMEON STODDARD*, Eſq; whom we follow'd to his Grave in the Week paſt, in his *Eightieth* Year. A *great* Age, which GOD made *healthful* and eaſie, attended with *plentiful Circumſtances*, his Reaſon and *Underſtanding* continuing, his *Sight* only decay'd, his *Mind* ſerene and placid, and his *Children* about him, and He honoured and happy in Them. But the Crown of all was a *pious* & *uſeful* Old Age, with a ſetled *Peace* and good *Hope* (thro' Grace) of a better Life; which

continued

continued with him *thro' the ſhadow of Death*; which GOD made *eaſie* to him, both as to Mind and Body.

THIS was a great Favour of GOD both to Him and to his Family. *Moſes* tells us, Pſalm xc. 10. That *the Days of our Years are threeſcore years and ten, and if by reaſon of ſtrength they be fourſcore Years, their ſtrength is Labour and Sorrow.* But here there was as little of the *Sorrow* felt from 70 to 80, as could be expected; and that *Comfort* of Life and *Peace* at the End of it, which makes living and dying *good.*

II. WHAT is it to *go in Peace?* Thou ſhalt go to thy Fathers *in Peace*, in a good Old Age.

1. To die in a *pardoned, juſtified* and *ſanctified State*, having our Peace made with GOD, reconciled to GOD thro' the Death of His SON. Rom. v. 1, 2. *Therefore being juſtified by Faith we have Peace with GOD, thro' our Lord JESUS CHRIST; by Whom alſo we have acceſs by Faith into this Grace wherein we ſtand, and rejoice in Hope of the Glory of GOD.* Pardon and Peace kiſs each other. He goes in Peace, that is found *in* CHRIST and in his Righteouſneſs, *is found of his Judge in Peace.* i. e. in a pardoned ſtate.

2. HE goes in Peace that dies in a *good Hope* or a *joyous Senſe* of his Peace made with GOD. A Perſon may go in Peace without *this*, but He eminently expires in Peace that has it. One that is in Peace with GOD may die fearing that he is not; but He enjoys a peaceful Death who has the reconciled Face of GOD ſhining upon him, when he comes to die. He may bow his Head and ſay, "*I will lay me down in Peace and ſleep! I know that my Redeemer liveth, and if after my skin Worms deſtroy this Body, yet in my Fleſh I ſhall ſee GOD! For me to live is CHRIST, and to die is Gain!* To die thus is to go in Peace.

3. FROM

3. From this well grounded Hope to be *willing* to die, and to *desire* to depart, is to go in Peace. 2 Cor. v. 1, 2. *For we know that if the Earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a Building of* GOD, *a House not made with Hands, Eternal in the Heavens: In this we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our House from Heaven: Now He that hath wro't us for this is* GOD, *who hath given to us the Earnest of the* SPIRIT: *Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at Home in the Body we are absent from the* LORD: *Willing rather to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord.* Phil. i. 23. *I am in a strait betwixt two, having a Desire to depart, and to be with* CHRIST *which is far better.* This, *this* is to go in Peace.

In order to which the following Things are of special Need and Use, in our Hearts and Lives.

1. Sincerity and *Uprightness.* There can be no true and Solid Peace for us, living or dying, without *this.* 2 Cor. i. 12. *For our Rejoycing is this, the Testimony of our Conscience, that in Simplicity and godly Sincerity, not with fleshly Wisdom, but by the Grace of* GOD, *we have had our Conversation in the World.* Psalm xxxvii. 37. *Behold the Upright, for the End of that Man is Peace.* Isai. lvii. 2. *He shall enter into Peace, they shall rest in their Beds, each one walking in his Uprightness.*

2. Diligence and *Industry* in working the Works of GOD while it is Day. Then when Night comes we may ly down to Rest. This was Christ's Peace, John xvii. 1. *Father, the Hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: I have glorified thee on the Earth, I have finished the Work which thou gavest me to do: And now, O Father, glorifie thou me with thine own self.* And this is *our* Peace in

Death, 2 Peter iii. 14. *Be diligent that ye be found of Him in Peace.*

3. DEVOTION: A close Walk with GOD in secret and publick; in the Worship of the Closet, of the Family and of the Temple. So *Enoch* walked with GOD, and GOD took him. So *Moses* liv'd and dy'd in the Mount with GOD. And *Simeon* and *Anna* went straight from the Temple below unto that above.

4. FAITH. The JustMan *lives* by this, and finds *Joy* and *Peace*, living and dying, *in Believing*. So *Stephen* saw JESUS at the right Hand of GOD, and kneeled down to die, praying, "*Lord Jesus receive my Spirit.* Faith in the once crucified, and now living Redeemer, is a sure Foundation for Peace in Death.

5. HUMILIATION *and Repentance*, deeply wrought into the Soul, and in a continual Exercise and Increase. Acts iii. 19. *Repent and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out, when the Times of Refreshment shall come from the Presence of the Lord.* A dying Hour is often made one of those Times of Refreshment to a true penitent. As the *Thief* upon the Cross looked upon the LORD JESUS and said, *Lord, Remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom*: *And* JESUS *said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.* Luke xxiii. 43.

6. THE *Witness of the HOLY SPIRIT* with the Heart and Conscience of a Believer, is the Sovereign Cause of Peace in Death. If he please to shine upon his own Work in the Soul. *Peace I leave with you*, said our *Lord JESUS, and I will send the COMFORTER unto you.* His Saints do especially need, seek and depend on, his Presence and Supports in their dying hours. HE *sheweth to a Man his Uprightness.* The *SPIRIT Himself* (says the *Apostle*) *beareth Witness with our Spirit, that we are the Children of GOD*, Rom. viii. 16. If HE *giveth Quietness, who can give Trouble? and if He hideth his Face, who can behold Him?* He divides

vides the Waters of *Jordan* before his People, and gives them a triumphant Paſſage into the Heavenly *Canaan*, if He pleaſes.

But this of a Souls *going in Peace*; at any Age, when it pleaſes GOD; and Younger Chriſtians are ſometimes help'd of GOD to do ſo, as well as Elder.

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Death, 2 Peter iii. 14. *Be diligent that ye be found of Him in Peace.*

3. Devotion: A close Walk with GOD in secret and publick; in the Worship of the Closet, of the Family and of the Temple. So *Enoch* walked with GOD, and GOD took him. So *Moses* liv'd and dy'd in the Mount with GOD. And *Simeon* and *Anna* went straight from the Temple below unto that above.

4. Faith. The JustMan *lives* by this, and finds *Joy* and *Peace*, living and dying, *in Believing*. So *Stephen* saw JESUS at the right Hand of GOD, and kneeled down to die, praying, "*Lord Jesus receive my Spirit.* Faith in the once crucified, and now living Redeemer, is a sure Foundation for Peace in Death.

5. Humiliation *and Repentance*, deeply wrought into the Soul, and in a continual Exercise and Increase. Acts iii. 19. *Repent and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out, when the Times of Refreshment shall come from the Presence of the Lord.* A dying Hour is often made one of those Times of Refreshment to a true penitent. As the *Thief* upon the Cross looked upon the Lord Jesus and said, *Lord, Remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom*: *And* Jesus *said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.* Luke xxiii. 43.

6. The *Witness of the HOLY SPIRIT* with the Heart and Conscience of a Believer, is the Sovereign Cause of Peace in Death. If he please to shine upon his own Work in the Soul. *Peace I leave with you*, said our *Lord JESUS, and I will send the COMFORTER unto you.* His Saints do especially need, seek and depend on, his Presence and Supports in their dying hours. He *sheweth to a Man his Uprightness.* The *SPIRIT Himself* (says the *Apostle*) *beareth Witness with our Spirit, that we are the Children of GOD*, Rom. viii. 16. If He *giveth Quietness, who can give Trouble? and if He hideth his Face, who can behold Him?* He divides

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II. A word to *Unregenerate* Persons advanc'd in Years. Alas! that there should be any such within the Walls of GOD's House! Born and baptised there, and educated under his Word and Ordinances; planted in his Courts, but Strangers yet to the New Birth! unfit to die and unmeet for the Kingdom of GOD! Let such consider, that Death is as *near* to them, as it is to Believers in Age. But what is *your* Age? and what the Death before *you?* Is it a *good* old Age? No. Is it a *going in Peace?* No. Then let a dreadful Sound be in your Ears, even the *Midnight Cry* of coming Death! and *no Peace, no Peace, saith my GOD, unto the Wicked.* But far the more Terror and Dismay, Anguish and Desolation, because of the Days and Years past in Sin and in Impenitence, which are many.

The *Sinner a hundred year old* is the more *accursed* in the Day of Judgment. He has *treasured up* Sin and *Wrath for the last Days. Go to now, weep and howl for the Miseries that are coming on you!* See *Death* advancing, as the wicked *Joram* saw *Jehu* driving furiously on him, and cried, *Is it Peace? Jehu!* But was answer'd with Disdain and Fury, *What Peace to thee* thou wicked Person!

III. A word of *Comfort* and *Direction* to Consorts, Children and other Relatives, in the *peaceful Death* of gracious aged Persons. What more could you wish? When *Death* comes thus, it is *that Desire which is the Tree of Life?* Here is no Room for Mourning, but for our Selves and our Children. 1 Thessal. iv. 13, 14. *I would not have you ignorant, Brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others which have no Hope. For if we believe that JESUS died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in JESUS will GOD bring with Him.*

Let us remember all that we have ſeen of CHRIST and *Grace* and *Heaven* in our Fathers deceaſed, veſterate and imitate that, and forget all their Infirmities and Weakneſs. Let us chuſe their GOD and good Ways, and ſeek their *Peace* in our latter End. So when *Joſeph* ſaw his *Father* die in a holy, peaceful, happy Manner, In a Tranſport of Grief and Joy he *fell* upon his pale Face and *kiſſed* it.

IV. Let *Young People* be exhorted and excited to be Religious betimes, that if they live to be *old*, or if they die *younger*, it may be in the Spirit, Grace, Faith and Peace of *Abraham*.

You are the *Children* of the Promiſe which GOD made to *Abraham*, the *better* Promiſes. May you indeed be the Heirs of the Spiritual and Heavenly Inheritance. May you live and die like Him, in Peace with GOD. That will make a *good Age*, if you die never ſo young. It is *well* with the Father, and *well* with the Child, if gone in Peace. All is well that ends well.

Let *young People* lay in betimes for *a good Age*, or a *happy Death*; as GOD ſhall pleaſe to prolong their Life, or call 'em away, ſhortly or ſuddenly. Early Religion is the ſhort Way to either, Epheſ. vi. 2, 3 *Honour thy Father and Mother, which is the firſt Commandment with Promiſe: That it may be well with thee, and that thou may'ſt live long upon the Earth.*

Flee youthful Luſts and Paſſions, Uncleanneſs, Intemperance, Anger and Wrath. Theſe are Sins againſt the Body and its Life, and fill Old Age with evil Days. Job xx. 11. *His Bones are full of the Sins of his Youth, which ſhall ly down with him in the Duſt.* But Chaſtity and Sobriety are *Health to the Navel and Marrow to the Bones.* And ſo are Meekneſs and Charity, Juſtice and Righteouſneſs,

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Let *Young People* be exhorted to be *Sober-minded*: And not only ſo, but *Spiritually-minded* which is *Life and Peace.* Let 'em imitate their pious *Anceſtors*, and emulate the Grace and Wiſdom of their *Elders.* Let 'em beware of a *worldly* Mind, and of *covetous* Practices; that they fall not into Temptations and Snares, fooliſh and hurtful Luſts, that drown Men in Deſtruction and Perdition. Let 'em give themſelves to the reading of GOD's Word and Prayer, give themſelves up to the LORD JESUS CHRIST betimes, joyn themſelves to his *Church*, and come to his *Table.* This is the Way to inward heavenly *Peace*, living and dying.

O lay a good Foundation, and do it early, againſt a dying Day and for the World to come. It can't be gone about too ſoon, nor done too well. *O GOD of my Father Abraham! Keep this in the Heart both of Elder and Younger Perſons and prepare their Heart unto Thee.*

How ſome *Elder Perſons* look on themſelves in any Way of *Preparation* for Death, and for Peace in their latter End, I know not; While they paſs away their Lives without *walking in all the Ordinances of the* LORD, and in the Neglect of that ſpecial covenanting and commemorating Ordinance, the *Holy Supper.* It has lain *heavy* on the Hearts

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In a Word, Let *Parents* and *Miniſters* endeavour what they can, under the Bleſſing of GOD, to ſowe the Seed of the Word, the Seed of Grace, in the Souls of the Children of CHRIST's Flock: Watering what they ſowe with their Prayers and Tears; and then leave them to a Covenant GOD, *the GOD of Abraham*; Who takes 'em up from the *Womb*, and unto Old Age it is HE, unto hoary Hairs He carries; And let us, as far as in us lies, portion *ours* in the ſure Mercies of an Everlaſting Covenant.

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